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SUBJECT: JORDAN: A/S POSNER HOSTS ROUNDTABLE WITH MEDIA ON HUMAN RIGHTS, DEMOCRACY

¶1. Post organized an on-the-record media roundtable January 11 with visiting DRL Assistant Secretary Michael Posner. The Assistant Secretary's remarks during the hour-long meeting with local media representatives received excellent coverage in the local newspapers published on January 13 and in two online news sites. Straight-forward reports focused entirely on A/S Posner's remarks about the U.S. position on human rights and democracy, as well as annual reports issued by the State Department.

¶2. All reports, which were featured in inside pages, some with photos, focused on A/S Posner's assertion that human rights and democracy go hand-in-hand with development. Also highlighted was his point that "society cannot be changed from the outside." Reports also noted his comment that Jordan has come a long way on all issues but that more needs to be done.

¶3. Sample headlines included the following:

-- Al Rai Arabic daily: "American official assesses the real chances for democracy and human rights in Jordan."

-- Al Ghad Arabic daily: "Assistant Secretary of State: Jordan has achieved great development in human rights protections."

-- Jordan Times English daily: "Liberty, democracy, development inseparable goals."

-- Ammannet.net (online): "Assistant Secretary of State: Our role in Jordan is limited to assessment."

Beecroft